

JUL 28 2010

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA
ROANOKE DIVISION

JOHN F. CORCORAN, CLERK
BY:  CLERK

ROBERT WAYNE GWYN, JR.,)	Civil Action No. 7:10-cv-00314
Plaintiff,)	
)	
v.)	<u>MEMORANDUM OPINION</u>
)	
S. YATES, et al.,)	By: Hon. James C. Turk
Defendants.)	Senior United States District Judge

Robert Wayne Gwyn, Jr., a Virginia inmate proceeding pro se, filed a civil rights complaint, pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 1983 with jurisdiction vested in 28 U.S.C. § 1343. Plaintiff names as defendants S. Yates, Hasty Martin, S.K. Young, John Doe Health Services Director, and John Garmen. Plaintiff alleges that the defendants were deliberately indifferent to his serious medical need, in violation of the Eighth Amendment. This matter is before the court for screening, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915A. After reviewing plaintiff's submissions, the court dismisses the complaint without prejudice for failing to state a claim upon which relief may be granted.

I.

Plaintiff, who is housed at the Pocahontas Correctional Center ("Pocahontas"), alleges the following facts in his stark verified complaint. "The nurse" refuses to allow plaintiff to see the doctor. Plaintiff is "being forced to inflict harm to [his] face by shaving while [he is] still currently under a 'no shave order' by the doctor at Green Rock Correctional Center [("GRCC")]. The nurses are practicing medicine without licenses. "The nurse" overrode the GRCC doctor's order. Plaintiff has not yet seen the doctor at Pocahontas. Plaintiff requests \$250,000.00 and a court order for a permanent "no shave order" due to his "medical history."

II.

The court must dismiss any action or claim filed by an inmate if the court determines that the action or claim is frivolous or fails to state a claim on which relief may be granted. See 28 U.S.C. §§ 1915(e)(2), 1915A(b)(1); 42 U.S.C. § 1997e(c). The first standard includes claims based upon “an indisputably meritless legal theory,” “claims of infringement of a legal interest which clearly does not exist,” or claims where the “factual contentions are clearly baseless.” Neitzke v. Williams, 490 U.S. 319, 327 (1989). The second standard is the familiar standard for a motion to dismiss under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 12(b)(6), accepting the plaintiff’s factual allegations as true. A complaint needs “a short and plain statement of the claim showing that the pleader is entitled to relief” and sufficient “[f]actual allegations . . . to raise a right to relief above the speculative level” Bell Atl. Corp. v. Twombly, 550 U.S. 544, 555 (2007) (internal quotation marks omitted). A plaintiff’s basis for relief “requires more than labels and conclusions” Id. Therefore, the plaintiff must “allege facts sufficient to state all the elements of [the] claim.” Bass v. E.I. Dupont de Nemours & Co., 324 F.3d 761, 765 (4th Cir. 2003).

However, determining whether a complaint states a plausible claim for relief is “a context-specific task that requires the reviewing court to draw on its judicial experience and common sense.” Ashcroft v. Iqbal, ___ U.S. ___, 129 S. Ct. 1937, 1950 (May 18, 2009). Thus, a court screening a complaint under Rule 12(b)(6) can identify pleadings that are not entitled to an assumption of truth because they consist of no more than labels and conclusions. Id. Although the court liberally construes pro se complaints, Haines v. Kerner, 404 U.S. 519, 520-21 (1972), the court does not act as the inmate’s advocate, sua sponte developing statutory and

constitutional claims the inmate failed to clearly raise on the face of his complaint. See Brock v. Carroll, 107 F.3d 241, 243 (4th Cir. 1997) (Luttig, J., concurring); Beaudett v. City of Hampton, 775 F.2d 1274, 1278 (4th Cir. 1985). See also Gordon v. Leeke, 574 F.2d 1147, 1151 (4th Cir. 1978) (recognizing that district courts are not expected to assume the role of advocate for the pro se plaintiff).

To state a claim under § 1983, a plaintiff must allege “the violation of a right secured by the Constitution and laws of the United States, and must show that the alleged deprivation was committed by a person acting under color of state law.” West v. Atkins, 487 U.S. 42, 48 (1988). A plaintiff must show that a defendant acted with deliberate indifference to a serious medical need in order to state a claim under the Eighth Amendment for insufficient medical assistance. Estelle v. Gamble, 429 U.S. 97, 104 (1976). In order to show deliberate indifference, a public official must have been personally aware of facts indicating a substantial risk of serious harm, and the official must have actually recognized the existence of such a risk. Farmer v. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 838 (1994). “Deliberate indifference may be demonstrated by either actual intent or reckless disregard.” Miltier v. Beorn, 896 F.2d 848, 851 (4th Cir. 1990). See Parrish ex rel. Lee v. Cleveland, 372 F.3d 294, 303 (4th Cir. 2004) (“[T]he evidence must show that the official in question subjectively recognized that his actions were ‘inappropriate in light of that risk.’”). However, the prisoner must demonstrate that defendants’ actions were “[s]o grossly incompetent, inadequate, or excessive as to shock the conscience or to be intolerable to fundamental fairness.” Id. Non-medical prison employees can be found to have acted with deliberate indifference if they intentionally delay or deny an inmate access to medical care or intentionally interfere with his prescribed treatment. Estelle, 429 U.S. 104-05. A medical need serious enough to give rise to a

constitutional claim involves a condition that places the inmate at a substantial risk of serious harm, usually loss of life or permanent disability, or a condition for which lack of treatment perpetuates severe pain. Sosebee v. Murphy, 797 F.2d 179, 181-83 (4th Cir. 1986)

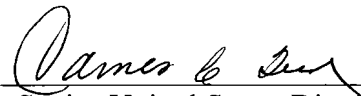
In this matter, plaintiff plainly fails to establish how any of the named defendants relate to the his allegations. Plaintiff does not identify individuals in his very short recitation of the facts in the complaint. Furthermore, plaintiff fails to establish how he has a serious medical need. All plaintiff tells the court is that he allegedly does not have to shave his face, but he does not provide the court with any other details. Moreover, whether a nurse is allegedly practicing without a license does not state a constitutional claim, and plaintiff's assertion that "a nurse" overrode a doctor at a different facility does not inform the court of what the matter was about or how it relates to his constitutional rights. Therefore, the court finds that plaintiff did not adequately plead the facts in his complaint and consequently fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted. Accordingly, the court dismisses the complaint without prejudice.

III.

For the foregoing reasons, the court dismisses the complaint without prejudice for failing to state a claim upon which relief may be granted, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1915A(b)(1). Plaintiff may refile his claims in a new and separate action at the time of his choosing.

The Clerk is directed to send copies of this memorandum opinion and the accompanying order to the plaintiff.

ENTER: This 28th day of July, 2010.



Senior United States District Judge